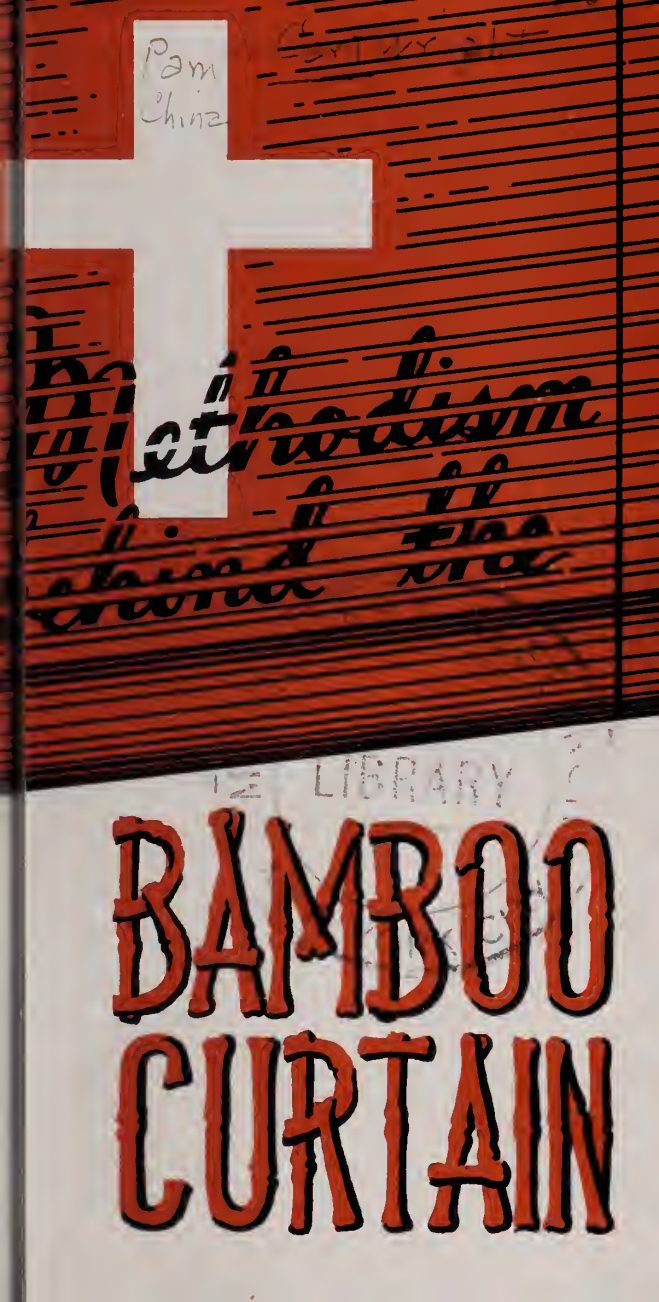

Pam
China
LIBRARY
BAMBOO
CURTAIN

Many children are hungry in China and the church does what it can to help them.

NOTE

This edition of "Methodism Behind the Iron Curtain" was published January 1, 1950, and all statements should be interpreted as applying to the situation prior to that date.

Methodism Behind The BAMBOO CURTAIN

By DR. FRANK T. CARTWRIGHT

A few American Methodists say bluntly, "We should pull out of Communist China. Let's take our losses and have no part in working with or under the Reds."

A larger number of Methodists ask questions that are strongly tinged with pessimism. "Can we get our money to missionaries and Chinese friends, or will it be seized by the Communists? Even if the money reaches them, can they use it for genuinely Christian purposes? Or must their Christian witness be so watered down as to be ineffective?"

But the vast majority ask their questions open-mindedly. They want to know what is the score over there? "Give us the facts," they say. "Don't tell us what is planned, or what is hoped, but what is actually happening, good or bad."

This booklet is intended to do just that.

It will give the facts as gleaned from letters and cablegrams received from "behind the bamboo curtain," from overseas telephone conversations with authorities in Shanghai and from first-hand reports by missionaries and American diplomats recently returned to this country after periods of life under the Communists.

It will follow the question-and-answer method. The questions have been selected from the many asked of missionaries and others during and following forums in different parts of the United States. They have been selected on the basis of significance as well as of frequency.

What About Methodist Churches and Their Work?

In most of the areas under the Chinese Communists the work of Methodist churches is going forward under fairly normal conditions, although with many

Service like that rendered in the eye clinic at Margaret Williamson Hospital in Shanghai, helps to explain the popularity of Protestantism in China.

difficulties. A missionary writing in the fall of 1949 from the Mid-China Conference said, "All preachers and Bible women are at their appointed posts." In a recent trans-Pacific telephone call from Shanghai, Bishop Ralph A. Ward reported the same condition in the East China Conference. Moore Memorial

This pastor carries a medical kit wherever he goes and renders service everywhere, trying to show how Christianity is concerned with all of life.

Church is crowded each Sunday, and at sacred concerts given on week nights there were standees in the great auditorium which seats 1600 people.

The one general exception to this reply is in North China. The rural churches in that episcopal area have been hard hit, largely because guerilla fighting during the Japanese occupation, followed by the intensely bitter fighting of the Civil War, led many pastors to withdraw to the cities from rural charges. Until recently they had been unable to return to their appointments and church work has been almost at a standstill in the country. Bishop Z. T. Kaung reports that church work in the cities has been going forward successfully.

The bishop was able to hold the 1949 sessions of the North China-Kalgan and the Shantung Annual Conferences. Those in the Yangtze Valley were scheduled and presumably were held. Bishop G. C. Lacy cabled that the Hinghwa Conference had been held. It is assumed that the others of the Foochow Area were also held.

Are There Opportunities for Evangelism or Only for Worship?

It is too soon after the Communist organization of their government to give a final answer, but there are some evidences that an outreach of the gospel message is possible in China. In Peking and Tsinan in northern China public baptisms and receptions into church membership were reported in the spring. Down in the Foochow Conference a "successful two weeks evangelistic campaign" was held in the fall of 1949. In may be that later the Chinese Communists will follow the pattern of Russia and other Soviet states in forbidding open evangelism and permitting only worship; but for the present the door remains open.

Christians are still preaching the Gospel to non-Christian Chinese.

Are Colleges and Seminaries Permitted to Serve?

The answer is "Yes."

Before Communist troops took over the areas where Christian universities are located, word was sometimes sent ahead "by grapevine" that they should carry on as usual. At Peking's Yenching University the Communist officers called as soon as the troops arrived and told the president and deans to continue their work. In the months since that time very little change has been ordered. After the Communist troops captured Nanking, Doctors Wu Yi-fang and Y. G. Chen, presidents of Ginling and Nanking respectively, called by appointment on the commissioner of education—and he sent his own car for their convenience.

The United Board for Christian Colleges in China, the organization through which Methodism assists these schools, reports that of the twelve Christian institutions in Communist-held areas, not one has ceased to function. The Law School of Soochow University has discontinued many of its courses because lawyers are to have no place under the new regime, but the Colleges of Arts and Sciences are continuing. Where there has been trouble, it has often had internal rather than external causes.

The major changes so far made are (1) the inclusion in the administrative committees of representatives of the junior faculty and clerks, of the student body, and of the workers on the campus, and (2) the order that courses in Communism shall be offered by the schools. This latter demand parallels the one of the previous (Kuomintang) government that Kuomintang principles be taught in all schools. However, the teachers for these courses can be appointed by each institution from among its own faculty.

So far there has been no interference with voluntary chapel services or extra-curricular teaching of

Students kneel at prayer in the College Chapel. This is typical of the thirteen Christian colleges.

Administration Building of the West China Union University, located at Chengtu.

The cross towers high over the Wuhu General Hospital and its service has not been disturbed.

specific Christian subjects. Curricular courses in religion continue to receive academic recognition. As a veteran missionary phrased it, "There have been no serious inroads as yet on the three freedoms of education—administrative, academic or religious."

Even more surprising is the fact that, up to the present, theological seminaries have remained open. The School of Religion of Yenching University has been closed as a separate school, but all of the courses are being taught in various departments of the University. Even in Mukden (Manchuria), where the Communists have been in control for eighteen months, the seminary is functioning.

What About Secondary Education?

The middle schools (high schools in American terminology) are having greater difficulty, yet most of these are open under Christian auspices. In North China all of them are functioning on their own campuses, even the Changli school, where in earlier years there were two destructive raids by Communist groups. Reports from the Yangtze Valley are to the effect that all are open with the exception of the two in Nanchang. These have been told officially that they may re-open, but their buildings were still occupied by Communist groups who were finding it "inopportune" to move. It was hoped that the campuses would soon be returned to the Christian schools.

The difficulties are many, largely due to the attitude of the students who assumed that with the coming of the Communist "millenium," tuition would be abolished and other costs reduced to a near-zero level. At certain schools they have demanded that discipline and other administrative functions be carried out "democratically," which is interpreted by them to mean under student control. As of this time, the Communist officials are backing the administrators rather than the students. However, reduction in local

sources of income is threatening the independent existence of many schools.

Are Methodist Hospitals Able to Function?

Again the answer is affirmative.

Some superintendents have felt it necessary to resign. In one institution staff intrigue and dissension, perhaps instigated by Communists, almost closed the hospital. All have had difficulties because of orders to lower charges for hospital care and for medical or surgical treatment, and because of the inability to import needed drugs and other supplies. Except one, Methodist hospitals are still open and are rendering Christian service. The exception is in Taian, Shantung. It was wrecked before the recent Communist advance.

The mammoth cross towering above the hospital at Wuhu still symbolizes the medical "mission of mercy" of the two score Methodist hospitals serving the suffering Chinese.

Can Methodist Missionaries Remain in China?

Many are still there and are living their Christian witness. At the present time 68% of the Methodist men and women from America who were in China at the peak of the post-war period are still at their stations. The Board of Missions and Church Extension gave its hearty approval to those who felt that they should leave in the face of the oncoming Communist armies; and it gave equal approval to those who, with the approval of their bishops, felt led to remain.

The Chinese Communists have given entry permits for several missionaries to return from non-Communist territory. Even more significant, they allowed the entry of a Methodist girl to marry a missionary of our church on the staff of Yenching University and

A pastor preaching in the open court-yard of the church in Chungking.

The Red Cross Corps of Moore Memorial Church in Shanghai, an example of the social service of Methodism which has won the toleration of the Communists.

The Methodist Church at Foochow, oldest in China. In the great cities, in county seats and in market towns the churches are centers of religious and social life.

have promised entry to three other new missionaries.

Up to the present none has reported imprisonment or other persecution. All are permitted to move freely about the cities where they reside, but only one has been given a military pass to travel far into the interior, and this was after long delay and against many obstacles. Several were given round trip passes to go to Shanghai from nearby cities on business or, in North China, to go to Peking.

Do Chinese Christians Want Missionaries to Stay?

Now they do; but earlier, when the Communist troops were merely a threat and not a reality, some Chinese advised their missionary friends to leave. They argued that, since much Communist agitation was anti-American, the Chinese church would stand a better chance of survival if free from the presence of Americans.

The advice was cancelled within a few weeks of the time it was given. Chinese college presidents who advised missionary faculty members to withdraw shortly reversed that stand and invited them to stay. Chinese preachers urged missionaries to remain if they were in good health and if their children were of an age-group that could "take it." The distinguished secretary of the National Y.M.C.A. wrote an open letter, urging western missionaries to stay so long as possible, thus joining Chinese Christians in witnessing to the international, world-wide character of the Christian fellowship. A Chinese pastor wrote to a missionary, "We could not conscientiously urge you to stay, but you will never know how grateful we are because you did remain."

No instance of Chinese Methodist church leaders advising missionaries to leave was reported during 1949, but many instances of appreciation because some missionaries are there.

Is Youth Work Closed As in Some European Countries?

Not so far as we know.

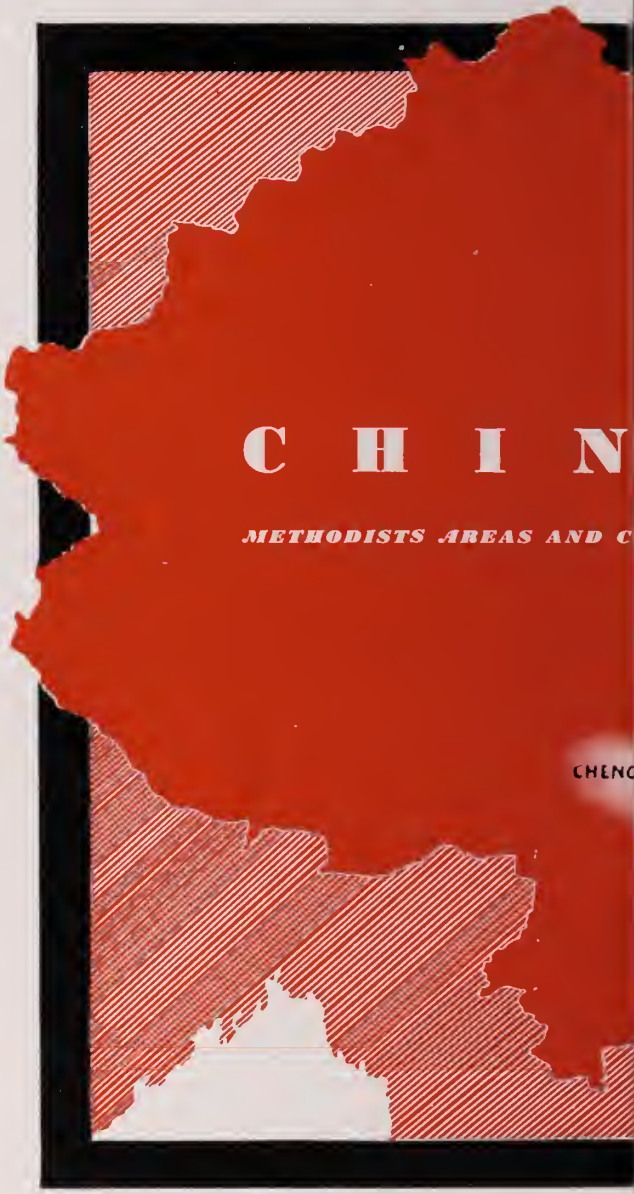
On the contrary, a church social-center in Peking is open daily. A youth institute was held near Tientsin last summer and missionaries were granted passes to attend and to assist in the program. Four youth institutes were held in the East China Conference territory, and the inspiring youth program of Moore Memorial Church was continuing at latest reports. From Foochow came word of a Christian conference during the summer for youth and of another in the fall for the Methodist teachers of primary and secondary schools.

Chinese leaders and missionaries in China realize that the typical Soviet program is to forbid Christian youth movements, and they are acquainted with the European pattern, where all work for youth is in the hands of the Communists. They realize, too, that if Chinese Communists ultimately follow the Lenin-Stalin line, Christian youth movements will be handicapped, if not forbidden. But they rejoice at the present opportunity. They are using it as intelligently and effectively as possible.

What About Bible Sales and Christian Literature?

In anticipation of probable disruption of their work and in fear of what might follow, the China Bible House and the United Christian Publishers planned early in 1949 to scatter their stocks and their plates. The facts of the present prove this to have been unnecessary. Bibles are openly sold. They can be sent by Chinese postal facilities. Christian literature is being produced and distributed. In November Chinese leaders voted to continue publishing and circulating "The Methodist Bulletin."

The Chinese edition of *The Upper Room* is printed regularly and sent out in large editions. It is used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SHAHSIEN
MINTSINGHSIEN
LEK-DU
FOOCHOW
HINGHUA
FUTSING
LUNGTIEN
SIENYU
PINGTANG

not alone by Methodists but by Christians of many denominations and by some who have united with no church.

Can Missionary Money Be Transmitted Without Loss?

Yes.

For a few days after the turn-over of Shanghai to the Communists it was impossible for the Methodist treasurers to draw funds from America. Knowing that this might prove true, the Board had approved the advance of considerable amounts of money for missionary support and for the use of the churches, schools and hospitals. *In less than two weeks' time* the Communists had authorized the government bank to accept checks and drafts on New York and to cash these for People's money at fixed rates of exchange. Mr. J. H. H. Berckman and Miss Bessie Hollows, treasurers in Shanghai, have been able to carry on all Methodist business since that time without undue delay, and they are now able to transmit funds to all parts of China under control of the People's Government.

In Hong Kong the Methodists have assistant treasurers, Lewistine M. McCoy and Miss Myrtle Smith. These function for Methodists in the area under Kuomintang control.

Are the Chinese Communists Truly Communist? In What Ways, If Any, Do They Differ from Russian Communists?

I am convinced that their leaders are truly and loyally Marxian Communists. This conviction is based on conversations with some party members when I was in China and, to a far greater extent, on the recent speeches, writings and actions of Mao Tze-tung, General Chu Teh, Chou En-lai and others. If the present leaders continue their control, Chinese Communism will remain Marxist in its fundamentals.

The basic difference between Communism in Europe and in China lies in the fact that for decades there has been a mighty revolution in progress in the latter country. Communists have built on that revolution of peasant farmers and intellectuals and have in most areas gained control of the movement. But they did not create the vast unrest and deep-seated resentments; instead, they skillfully fanned the flames and then began to guide the holocaust. Another point of difference is that between 1928 and September 1949 there were few, if any, Russian "advisers" in the Chinese movement. Newspapers report that a considerable number of Russians are now in Peking.

How Do You Explain the Present Seemingly Tolerant Attitude of Chinese Communists Toward Protestantism?

There are several factors which stand out clearly. One is the fairly large number of "intellectuals" among the active Communists who have been educated in Christian schools in China and who are either professing Christians or are sympathetic toward Christian principles. These men and women are acquainted with and friendly toward American missionaries, and they help other Communists to distinguish between the American government and American individuals in China.

Another is the fact that Protestant Christianity has not had strong political ties. Intelligent Communists know that Protestant missionaries and Chinese have individually and in occasional groups protested to the Nationalist government officials against its policies, and especially its suppression of non-Nationalist groups. The Communists well know that some missionaries have even publicly attacked the Kuomintang on this score both in China and abroad.

Still another is found in the large proportion of missionaries who have of their own choice remained

The auditorium of the Moore Memorial Methodist Church at Shanghai.

in territories captured by the People's Army, desiring to serve in the spirit of Christ regardless of political regime.

What I consider the greatest influence in gaining such tolerance is the long-standing record of service to needy and suffering Chinese rendered by Christians. Christian hospitals and public health units are widely scattered over the land. Agricultural colleges and experiment stations, rural-centered schools and rural service unions, have worked for the betterment of living conditions. Christians have been leaders in

Church workers distribute soy beans to refugees after the Communists took over in Shanghai.

credit unions and cooperatives. Doctors and nurses and medical technicians have been trained in Christian medical schools and hospitals. The first Chinese dentists were trained in a Christian college. Social service has been rendered in the name of Christ to underprivileged city dwellers through institutional churches and related agencies.

Relief provided by Christians in America and other western lands has been widely administered by Church World Service and the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief. Almost invariably such relief has reached the needy through missionaries, Chinese preachers and Bible women. The Christian church has been almost synonymous with relief during these recent years of unparalleled misery in China.

Because the Christian churches in China have been service agencies as well as worshipping and evangelizing agencies, I believe the Chinese Communists see Christianity through different colored lenses from those used by European Soviet leaders.

Is It a Permanent Policy or a Temporary Expedient?

I do not know; and I doubt whether anyone knows except a few top-ranking Chinese Communists. All that is known is that orders have been issued from the high command that religion is not to be persecuted, that westerners are not to be interferred with so long as they obey the laws and that "freedom of religion and freedom to oppose religion" is the policy of the Central People's Government.

This may be a fixed and permanent policy. Or it may be, as some missionaries and diplomats believe, only a policy of expediency, an effort to win friends among western nations until the Communists deem the time ripe to "crack down" on Christianity.

Only time can answer this question. But in the meantime Christians in China are continuing their witness and their service.

Does Work in Communist Territory Repudiate Our Work in Nationalist Areas?

Not in the least.

Missionaries and Chinese Methodists have worked under several political regimes—the Manchu rulers, the governments created by the 1911 Revolution, the Nationalist rule established in 1925, the Japanese occupation and the years following. They continued to work in the West China Conference under the Nationalists until late December when that area was taken by the Communists.

Methodists in China, and American missionaries in particular, try to remain free of governmental entanglement. Methodism did not repudiate any work in Nationalist China nor did it willingly discontinue any. Christians seek to meet spiritual and physical need under any political regime.

What Is the Policy of Methodist Missions?

At its Annual Meeting, December 9, 1948, the Division of Foreign Missions took its stand as follows:

"First of all, the Division of Foreign Missions expresses its sympathy for the people of China, one of earth's great races and potentially one of its great nations. The sympathy of American Methodism has found its outlet in the Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief, and we have confidence that this Committee will continue to extend the fullest possible aid to suffering Chinese.

"As regards its missionary work in China, the Division re-affirms the historic policy of Methodism to go forward in what seems clearly to be the line of God's will, regardless of possible dangers. In and for China, we would 'do all we can, the best we can, as long as we can.'

"We sympathetically and whole-heartedly support conscientious field decisions regarding missionaries, whether of those who evacuate to the United States, those who transfer from danger zones to work elsewhere in China, or in other lands, or those who volunteer to remain and serve under any political regime.

"If future events prove that it is impossible for American missionaries to work in territory controlled by Chinese Communists, this Division pledges itself to back

The Chapel at the University of Nanking. Worship is part of all worthy higher education.

A shipment of soy beans from Church World Service has helped the Chinese farmers to plant their crops.

the Chinese Methodists and all other Christians in that land with our sympathy, our prayers and our support.

"To whatever degree may be possible, we individually and collectively would walk the hard road together with our fellow Christians of China. We firmly believe that the Christ is walking there with many Chinese, and we want to keep step with them and Him."

Sewing projects have been organized by the churches for the refugees in China.

What Do People Say About Conditions and Our Plans?

A woman missionary, following seven months of work under the People's Government, wrote from North China, "I thank God that I'm alive at such a time as this, and that I'm right here."

Before the Communist troops took over the city where she lived, a wise and devoted Chinese wrote, "We have something which will be needed by people and which Christians alone can give. If we are not allowed to preach by words and work, we can certainly witness by our deeds and lives. For the time being we may be bound by another set of rules and regulations of the new regime, but our spirits will not be bound by anything . . . We can be living witnesses at any time, under any circumstances."

A Christian business man, who under Communism will perhaps lose most of his property, wrote, "I believe that we Christian people must have courage and an unflinching spirit of going forward. With this spirit many of our fellow Christians gave their lives and laid the foundations of the Christian church in this country during the Boxers' Rebellion in 1900 and the riots of 1927."

In a letter from another part of China a mother said, "I still believe that we did the right thing in refusing to follow the Consul's advice to leave. Life is hard, harder now than we have before known, but it is rewarding."

In late September an informal meeting was held in Shanghai of all the Methodist missionaries available. The notes taken by one of the number record many instances of difficulties for missionaries and for Chinese Christians, but it is significant that only one person spoke in a mood of discouragement. Some of those present later quoted with approval the epigram of one man, "The facts are optimistic; only our fears lead us to pessimism." Another said, "If we had known six months ago what we now know,

we would not have been so apprehensive."

This section opened with a quotation from an older missionary; it can well close with the words of a younger one. He writes: "At this crucial period in China there is every reason why the Christian churches in America should stand behind the Church in China. They should continue to study about, pray for, and financially support the conferences and their affiliated institutions. This is no time to lose heart. It is light that we are called to bring out of darkness. The darkness is here. It is in every land. Yet the light is here too. And it is the light that really counts."

It is said that 400,000 homeless refugees like this one crowded into Shanghai early in 1949.

Methodism In China

Annual Conferences, 10 (These make up the China Central Conference). Episcopal areas, 4. Churches, 815. Members, 68,845. Chinese pastors, 463. Institutions of learning, 66. (45 high schools, 7 universities, 4 theological seminaries, 6 Bible training schools, 2 medical schools, 2 normal schools; many of these are union institutions. There are also numerous small primary schools). Hospitals and dispensaries, 28. Orphanage, 1. Publishing house, 1. Experimental farm, 1. Missionaries now on the field, 167.

Episcopal Areas, 4. Chengtu Area, Bishop W. Y. Chen, Chungking. Foochow Area, Bishop Carleton Lacy, Foochow. Nanking Area, Bishop Ralph A. Ward, Shanghai. North China Area, Bishop Z. T. Kaung, Peking.

INSTITUTIONS

MID-CHINA CONFERENCE

CHINKIANG
- Olivet Memorial Girls' High School

NANKING
- Methodist Girls' High School
- Woman's Bible Teachers' Training School
- Nanking Theological Seminary
- Ginling College
- University of Nanking
- University Hospital and School of Nursing

WUHU
- General Hospital and School of Nursing

EAST CHINA CONFERENCE

CHANGCHOW
- Stephenson Memorial Hospital and School of Nursing

HUCHOW
- Virginia School (for girls)
- Boys' High School
- General Hospital and School of Nursing

SHANGHAI
- Joint Treasurer's Office
- McTyeire School
- Woman's Christian Medical College, Margaret Williamson Hospital and School of Nursing
- Moore Memorial Institutional Church

SOOCHOW
- Davidson Girls' School
- Atkinson Academy
- Laura Haygood Normal School
- Soochow University

Soochow General Hospital and School of Nursing
Konghong Institutional Church

SUNGKIANG
Susan B. Wilson School

WUSIH
Christian Social Center

FOOCHOW CONFERENCE

BINGTANG
Lang Hwa Junior High School

FOOCHOW
Tai Maiu Girls' School
Anglo-Chinese College
Hwa Han High School
Hwa Nan College
Woman's Biblical Institute
Union Kindergarten Training School
Union High School
Union Theological Seminary
Fukien Christian University
Willis F. Pierce Memorial Hospital and School of Nursing

FUTSING
Ming Ngie Junior High School
Marguerite Stewart Junior School
Lucie F. Harrison Hospital

KUTIEN
Girls' School
Boys' School
Wiley Hospital

LEK-DU
Girls' Junior High School
Good Shepherd Hospital

LUNGTIEN
Boys' School
Woolston Memorial Dispensary

MINTSINGHSIEN
Tien Yu Junior High School

HINGHWA CONFERENCE

HINGHWA
Hamilton Girls' High School
Guthrie Memorial High School
Rebecca McCabe Orphanage

SIENYU
Frances Nast Gamble Memorial School
Boys' School
Sienyu Christian Union Hospital

KIANGSI CONFERENCE

KIUKIANG
Rulison Girls' High School
Knowles Bible School
William Nast Academy
Danforth Memorial Hospital
Water-of-Life Hospital

NANCHANG
Baldwin Girls' School
Nanchang Academy
Ida Kahn Hospital for Women and Children
Susan Toy Ensign Memorial Hospital

NORTH CHINA CONFERENCE

CHANGLI
- Alderman Girls' School
- Changli Academy

LANHSIEN
- Lanhsien Junior High School

PEKING
- Mary Porter Gamewell School
- Peking Academy
- Peking Vocational School
- Sleeper Davis Hospital and School of Nursing
- General Hospital
- New Light School for Women
- Hopkins Memorial Hospital
- Union Bible Training School
- Peking Theological College
- Yenching University

TIENTSIN
- Keen School
- Boys' School (High)
- Isabella Fisher Hospital

TSUNHUA
- Boys' School

SHANGTUNG CONFERENCE

TAIAN
- Ts'ui Ying Academy
- Po Chi Hospital
- (Both damaged and inactive)

TSINAN
- Cheeloo University School of Medicine
- University Hospital and School of Nursing

WEST CHINA CONFERENCE

CHENGTU
- Methodist Girls' School
- Union High School
- School of Midwifery and Lying-In-Hospital
- Methodist Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital
- West China Union University
- West China Union Theological College

KIENYANG
- Rural Christian Center

CHUNGKING
- Methodist Girls' School
- Lewis Memorial Institutional Church
- Chiu Ching School
- General Hospital

SUINING
- Methodist Union Girls' High School

TZECHUNG
- Caldwell Girls' Junior High School
- Chadwick Memorial Hospital
- Fidelia DeWitt Training School

YENPING CONFERENCE

NANPING (YENPING)
- Chien Chin High School
- Alden Speare Hospital

SHAHSIEN
- Methodist Hospital

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Board of Missions and Church Extension

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THE METHODIST CHURCH

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